United Nations A/RES/71/233

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 February 2017

Seventy-first session
Agenda item 19 (*i*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2016

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/71/463/Add.9)*]

71/233. Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/7 of 16 October 1998, 54/215 of 22 December 1999, 55/205 of 20 December 2000, 56/200 of 21 December 2001, 58/210 of 23 December 2003, 60/199 of 22 December 2005, 62/197 of 19 December 2007, 64/206 of 21 December 2009, 66/206 of 22 December 2011, 69/225 of 19 December 2014 and 70/201 of 22 December 2015, as well as its resolutions 65/151 of 20 December 2010 on the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and 67/215 of 21 December 2012, in which it decided to declare 2014–2024 the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Please recycle

Recalling its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, by which it adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the 2005 World Summit Outcome[1] and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals,[2]

Reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[3] and Agenda 21[4] and the principles set out therein, and recalling the recommendations and conclusions contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation)[5] and the outcome documents of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",[6] the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled "SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway",[7] and the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, entitled "Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024",[8]

Welcoming the Paris Agreement[9] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[10] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Welcoming also Expo 2017, to be held in Astana, on the theme "Future energy",

Reaffirming that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized in the achievement of sustainable development, and recognizing the need for the creation of an enabling environment at all levels and across all sectors for the achievement of sustainable development,

Emphasizing that the increased use and promotion of new and renewable sources of energy for sustainable development could make a significant contribution towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Highlighting the importance of the empowerment of developing countries to achieve universal access through the rapid expansion of affordable sustainable energy worldwide,

---

[1] Resolution 60/1.

[2] Resolution 65/1.

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex II.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[6] Resolution 66/288, annex.

[7] Resolution 69/15, annex.

[8] Resolution 69/137, annex II.

[9] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

Deeply concerned that 2.7 billion people in developing countries, especially in rural areas, rely on traditional biomass for cooking and heating, while noting the disproportionate health impact and workload on women and children, that 1.2 billion people are without access to electricity and that, even when energy services are available, millions of poor people are unable to pay for them,

Recognizing that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that this will include the mobilization of financial resources as well as capacity-building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed,

Welcoming global multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as Sustainable Energy for All, which has given strong momentum to the promotion of renewable energy, and the initiatives of the Global Climate Action Agenda, noting that such partnerships can contribute to reaching the objective of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all,

Noting with appreciation the work of the International Renewable Energy Agency, which facilitates the widespread and increased adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy,

Stressing the need for a coherent, integrated approach to energy issues and the promotion of synergies across the global energy agenda for sustainable development, with a focus on eradicating poverty and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals,

Stressing also the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All,[11] calls for the rapid implementation of the strategic objectives as defined in the global plan of action for the Decade, as described in a previous report of the Secretary-General on the topic,[12] and also takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy;[13]

2. *Also takes note* of the International Renewable Energy Agency work programme and budget for 2016–2017, and encourages the Agency to continue to support its members in the achievement of their renewable energy objectives;

3. *Emphasizes* that universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all is an integral part of poverty eradication and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;[14]

4. *Also emphasizes* the need to improve access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all and environmentally sound energy services and resources for sustainable development, and takes into consideration the diversity of situations, national policies and specific needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

---

[11] A/71/320.

[12] See A/69/395, sect. III.

[13] A/71/220.

[14] Resolution 70/1.

5. *Stresses* the need to increase the share of new and renewable sources of energy in the global energy mix, as well as the rate of improvement in energy efficiency, as an important contribution to achieving universal access to sustainable modern energy services, and recognizes that the activities of countries in broader energy-related matters are prioritized according to their specific challenges, capacities and circumstances, including their energy mix and energy systems;

6. *Emphasizes* that improving energy efficiency, increasing the share of renewable energy and promoting cleaner and energy-efficient technologies are important for sustainable development, and also emphasizes the importance of promoting energy conservation, developing energy-saving technologies and products and establishing effective mechanisms to improve the efficient use of energy-related resources;

7. *Also emphasizes* the necessity of establishing a modern energy system that is clean, low-carbon, climate-resilient, safe and efficient, includes renewable energy sources, as appropriate, and delivers energy in line with needs so as to promote affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;

8. *Underscores* the importance of access to cleaner and more efficient cooking and heating methods, welcomes ongoing efforts, and in this regard calls for the promotion of an enabling environment at the national and international levels for the promotion of the usage of sustainable, cleaner and more efficient cooking and heating methods, in all countries, in particular developing countries;

9. *Emphasizes* the potential of sustainable energy use to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, recognizes that increasing the deployment of renewable energy is a component of many countries' nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[9] and urges effective and timely support for the full implementation of those contributions, as applicable;

10. *Notes* that the impacts of climate change can also threaten access to and the supply of energy, and also notes the importance of increasing the resilience of the energy sector to climate change, in particular regarding sources of renewable energy such as hydropower, among others;

11. *Welcomes* the significant cost reductions associated with renewable energy, and emphasizes that large-scale deployment of technologies has been uneven and that support is required to realize the technologies' potential, along with appropriate policy initiatives and investments at the national and international levels, with Governments working in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector;

12. *Invites* all relevant funding institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as regional funding institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organizations, to continue ongoing efforts and take further action to provide financial resources, as appropriate, to support efforts aimed at the development of the energy sector in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the basis of environment-friendly, low-carbon and climate-resilient new and renewable sources of energy of demonstrated viability, noting the potential catalytic effect of concessional and other finance and taking fully into account the development structure of energy-based economies of developing countries, and to assist in the attainment of the levels of investment necessary to expand renewable energy deployment and development, including beyond urban areas;

13. *Encourages* the development, dissemination and diffusion and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, and highlights the importance of integrating sustainable energy in the Technology Facilitation Mechanism;

14. *Stresses* the importance of strategies and contributions by all relevant stakeholders to multi-stakeholder partnerships in ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and encourages coordination and collaboration between the United Nations and relevant multi-stakeholder partnerships, such as Sustainable Energy for All;

15. *Recognizes* the catalytic effect of capacity-building and technical assistance on sustainable energy deployment, and encourages existing and new efforts to enable Governments from developing countries and relevant stakeholders to plan, finance, implement and monitor sustainable energy projects to further strengthen their national institutions and capacities;

16. *Encourages* efforts by Governments aimed at creating and developing an enabling environment at all levels to ensure the promotion of energy efficiency and the use of new and renewable sources of energy;

17. *Also encourages* the development of viable market-oriented strategies that could result in further rapid reductions in the cost of new and renewable sources of energy and could further increase the competitiveness of those technologies, including through the adoption, as appropriate, of public policies for research, development and market deployment, including rationalizing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances;

18. *Recognizes* that sustainable energy access and deployment can both improve and be accelerated by gender equality and women's empowerment, and calls upon Governments, the United Nations development system and other stakeholders to increase educational and capacity-building programmes for women in the sector, to promote women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership in the design and implementation of energy policies and programmes, to mainstream a gender perspective in such policies and programmes and to ensure women's full and equal access to and use of new, renewable and sustainable energy to enhance their economic empowerment, including employment and other income-generating opportunities;

19. *Calls upon* Governments, as well as relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, to combine, as appropriate, the increased use of new and renewable energy resources, more efficient use of energy, greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the sustainable use of traditional energy resources;

20. *Calls for* ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, as such services are an integral part of poverty eradication, human dignity, quality of life, economic opportunity, the combating of inequality, the promotion of health and the prevention of morbidity and mortality, access to education, clean drinking water and sanitation, food security, disaster risk reduction and resilience, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental impact reduction, social inclusion and gender equality, including for persons affected by humanitarian crises;

21. *Welcomes* the expansion of renewable energy capacity additions, which are now greater than those of other energy power sources, as well as the net positive job contribution of renewables;

22. *Recognizes* the importance of expanding the use of renewable energy beyond the power sector, encourages further efforts to promote renewable energy use in industry, construction and infrastructure and in particular in the transport sector, in the context of sustainable development, including climate change, and calls for greater efforts and attention to those sectors, including through policy initiatives and investments at the national and international levels in order to scale up new and renewable energy technologies and low-carbon technologies that can reduce negative environmental impacts, especially in the near term;

23. *Also recognizes* that current global progress in improving energy efficiency falls well below the pace necessary to double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency by 2030;

24. *Encourages* the adoption of building performance codes and standards, the uptake of renewable energy, energy efficiency labelling, the retrofitting of existing buildings and public procurement policies on energy, among other modalities as appropriate, as well as the prioritization of smart grid systems, district energy systems and community energy plans to improve synergies between renewable energy and energy efficiency;

25. *Calls for* national efforts to promote access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and reaffirms its commitment to support subnational and local efforts, taking advantage of their direct control, where applicable, of local infrastructure and codes to foster uptake in end-use sectors, such as residential, commercial and industrial buildings, industry, transport, waste and sanitation;

26. *Encourages* Governments, international organizations and other relevant stakeholders to use and promote an integrated resource planning and management approach in their energy strategies, which considers energy choices in the context of linked sectors, inter alia, water, air quality and food, taking into account national circumstances;

27. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue efforts to promote the mobilization of stable and predictable financial resources and technical assistance for sustainable energy and to enhance the effectiveness, coordination and full utilization of appropriate international funds for the effective implementation of national and regional high-priority projects for ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, and requests the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to make concrete proposals on the strengthening, through existing arrangements, of both inter-agency and intergovernmental coordination, and institutional support on energy issues, and to give appropriate consideration to progress on sustainable energy in the context of the 2030 Agenda in his report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

28. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare, in consultation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders, a report on the activities carried out to mark the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All and related activities

within the United Nations system for submission to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session;

30. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency and related sustainable practices in all United Nations facilities around the world;

31. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all", unless otherwise agreed.

66th plenary meeting
21 December 2016